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CATALOGING PREP.

**Teacher's  
Guide**

# Visiting People on a Dairy Farm



**United States Department of Agriculture**



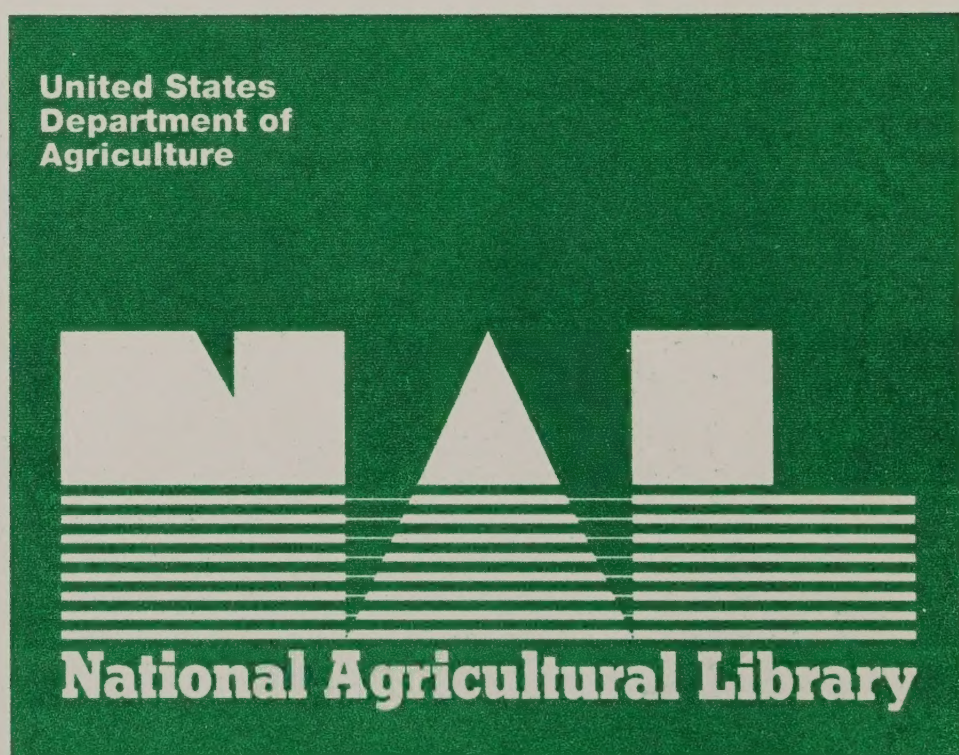
# **A Note to the Teacher**

The purpose of this booklet is to help your students understand where milk comes from, and to show them what life is like on a dairy farm. It evolved from an extensive visit with the Schwartzbeck family.

This Teacher's Guide can serve as a lesson plan for the booklet. It contains objectives, activities, and questions. Both the booklet and the guide are divided into seven parts, each of which can be used as an independent lesson. Parts one and two, which are comparatively short, can also be combined as one lesson.

We think that you will find these materials to be especially useful in helping students learn about a vital part of life. If we can be of further assistance, please contact:

Special Programs Center  
Room 528-A  
Office of Governmental and Public Affairs  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C. 20250



April 1981

# **Lesson 1:**

## **Introduction**

**Objective 1.** For the student to understand that this booklet is about life on a dairy farm and about how milk is produced.

**Question 1.** Where do the Schwartzbecks live?

**A.** They live in the country near Baltimore, Maryland.

**Question 2.** What is this story about?

**A.** This story is about life on the dairy farm and about how milk is produced.



# Lesson 2.

## The People

**Objective 1.** For the student to understand that the Schwartzbeck family works together.

**Question 1.** Who are Gus and Shane? What do they do on the farm?

**A.** Gus and Shane are the Schwartzbeck youngsters. Their chores include feeding calves and cleaning the barns, helping to plant corn and harvest hay, and learning to fix machines. They also play a lot.

**Question 2.** What will happen to the farm when Gus and Shane grow up?

**A.** The farm will probably belong to Gus and Shane.

**Question 3.** Why do Joe and Nona farm for a living?

**A.** Joe and Nona like to farm. They like living in the country, and they prefer to work for themselves.

**Question 4.** Explain how Joe is a jack-of-all-trades.

**A.** Joe does many different jobs on the farm. He has to have some understanding of law, bookkeeping, animal medicine, mechanics, science, business, and . . . dairy farming.

**Question 5.** What kind of work does Nona do on the farm?

**A.** Nona is in charge of some jobs and helps out on others. She is in charge of the calves and helps in the milking. She keeps many farm records, functions as a mother and homemaker, and helps in the community with such things as the county fair.

**Question 6.** Who is Harold Holman and what is his job?

**A.** The Schwartzbecks call Harold Holman "Mr. Gus." He is the hired man and helps with all the farmwork. He is especially good with cows.

**Activity 1.** List the chores that you do at home. Which ones do you like best? The least? Explain how your chores help the rest of your family.

**Activity 2.** Tell about someone who is "one in a thousand" like Mr. Gus.



# Lesson 3:

## The Farm

**Objective 1.** For the student to explain that hard work, experience, and borrowed money made the Schwartzbeck dream farm a reality.

**Objective 2.** For the student to explain that high milk production is important to a dairy farm.

**Question 1.** What was Peace and Plenty Farm like when Joe and Nona bought it?

**A.** Peace and Plenty Farm was rundown. The big house had no modern electricity and hot water. But the farm did have 290 acres of good land.

**Question 2.** Who owns the Federal Land Bank, and to whom do they lend money?

**A.** The Federal Land Bank is owned by farmers and they lend money to farmers.

**Question 3.** Why did the Federal Land Bank lend money to the Schwartzbecks?

**A.** The Federal Land Bank lent the money because it believed the Schwartzbecks could be successful. They already owned 60 dairy cows, had farm experience, and were hard workers.

**Question 4.** What is Peace and Plenty Farm like now?

**A.** Peace and Plenty Farm is producing all the corn, hay, and milk that its new owners thought it could. Many new cows have been added. The big house has been modernized and a lot of new buildings have been built.

**Question 5.** What is the milk parlor and why was it built?

**A.** The milk parlor is the building where the cows are milked. It was built to make milking faster and easier.

**Question 6.** Compare the amount of milk that Schwartzbeck cows give with the amount of milk given by average cows.

**A.** Schwartzbeck cows give almost 16,000 pounds of milk a year. Average cows give about 10,000 pounds.

**Activity 1.** The Schwartzbecks call their home "Peace and Plenty Farm." What would be a good name for your home?

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**Activity 2.** The Schwartzbecks went into dairy farming because it interested them. List some of your interests. Then think of some jobs that would interest you.

**Activity 3.** A quart of milk weighs about 2 pounds. a) How many quarts of milk does a Schwartzbeck cow give a year? b) How many quarts does it give in a day? c) Find out how many quarts of milk your class drinks a day. d) Then figure out how many Schwartzbeck cows your class would need to supply it with milk.



# **Lesson 4:**

## **The Animals**

**Objective 1.** For the student to understand why some cows give more milk than others.

**Question 1.** Why are the Schwartzbecks gentle with their cows?

**A.** They are gentle with their cows because relaxed cows give more milk.

**Question 2.** Why do the Schwartzbecks keep such careful records on each milk cow?

**A.** Careful records help select better dairy cows. It is like keeping the player with the better batting average and trading away those with poor batting averages. The cows are bred to the best bulls to produce the most promising calves.

**Question 3.** What is a heifer?

**A.** A heifer is a kind of “teenage” cow. Because a heifer has not yet had a calf, it does not yet give milk.

**Activity 1.** Give an example, from your own experience, of when being gentle to an animal has paid off.

**Activity 2.** Find out if anybody in your class owns a registered animal. Have them explain the “family tree” of their animal.

# Lesson 5:

## The Crops

**Objective 1.** For the student to name crops that are important feed for dairy cows.

**Objective 2.** For the student to name factors that decrease crop yield.

**Question 1.** Give two reasons that Joe raises crops.

**A.** He raises crops to feed his cows. If he had to buy all his feed, it would be very expensive to feed them. He usually harvests more feed than he can use. He sells the extra for cash to pay for expenses such as fertilizer.

**Question 2.** Name two crops grown on Peace and Plenty Farm.

**A.** Corn and hay are grown on Peace and Plenty Farm.

**Question 3.** What is silage and how is it used?

**A.** Silage is chopped green corn. It includes stalks, leaves, and immature ears of corn. Silage is fed to dairy cows; they love it.

**Question 4.** If Joe is unlucky, what could happen to his corn crop?

**A.** The crop could be destroyed by frost, fungus, drought, or insects.

**Question 5.** What is hay, and why is it important for dairy cows?

**A.** The hay used on this farm is a combination of clover, alfalfa, and timothy. It is important as a source of fiber, which helps to keep the cow's digestive system healthy. It is a good source of protein, also.

**Question 6.** Why is it important to get the hay stored before it is rained on?

**A.** Rain washes away the soluble nutrients in hay. It also separates some of the leaves from the stems, and they are left in the field. The leaves contain the best nutrients. It may also cause some spoilage, resulting in poor feed.

**Activity 1.** Find out what would happen to a cow if it were not milked. (If the cow missed even one milking, she would be in great pain. In a few days, if she were not milked, she would dry up, perhaps even develop a disease called mastitis.)



**Activity 2.** Invite a dairy farmer to visit your class. Ask the farmer whether it is possible that there will not always be enough milk for everyone to drink. Also ask what the weather was like last year and whether it was good for a dairy farm.

**Activity 3.** Ask the local Agricultural Extension Agent if he or she would visit your class and explain how corn and hay are important to dairy cows.

**Activity 4.** Ask the Extension Agent to save you copies of old farm magazines to clip. Make a mural or collage of a dairy farm. Be sure to include different kinds of cattle (such as cows, bulls, heifers, and calves) and different kinds of crops.

**Activity 5.** Next time you visit a county or State fair, look for live dairy cows and crops they eat.

# Lesson 6:

## Machines and Buildings

**Objective 1.** For the student to be able to list machines used on a dairy farm.

**Objective 2.** For the student to be able to list buildings that are found on a dairy farm.

**Question 1.** Name some of the machines used on Peace and Plenty Farm.

**A.** The farm uses tractors, corn-choppers, hay balers, corn planters, plows, and trucks.

**Question 2.** How can the Schwartzbecks use machines that they don't own?

**A.** They can share with their neighbors.

**Question 3.** How does Joe keep his machines in tiptop shape?

**A.** Joe fixes them himself. He seldom hires a mechanic.

**Question 4.** What is stored in the silos, and why is it stored there?

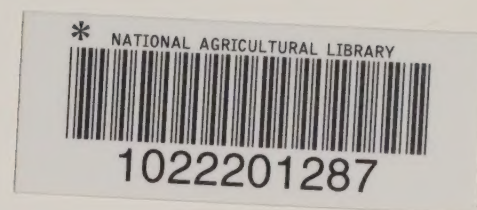
**A.** Silage is stored in the silos, which protect the chopped corn from weather.

**Activity 1.** Make your mural or collage more complete. Include different kinds of buildings and machines needed on a dairy farm.

**Activity 2.** Sharing machines is an old farm custom that saves money. Make a list of things that you share with your friends.

**Activity 3.** Keeping farm machines in tiptop shape keeps them from breaking down. Make a list of your belongings that you try to keep in tiptop shape.





## Lesson 7:

# A Visit to the Kitchen

**Objective 1.** For the student to understand that there is a trend toward fewer but larger dairy farms.

**Objective 2.** For the student to understand there are three classes of milk and to be able to explain how each class is used.

**Question 1.** How many dairy farms are there in the United States today? How many were there when Joe was a youngster?

**A.** Today there are about 300,000 dairy farms. When Joe was a youngster, there were 3,500,000 . . . more than 10 times as many.

**Question 2.** Does the United States produce more or less milk now than it did when Joe was young?

**A.** It produces about the same now as it did then.

**Question 3.** Compare the size of dairy farms now with the size of dairy farms when Joe was young.

**A.** Dairy farms are much larger now. A dairy with 100 cows used to be a big farm. Today, some unusual farms have more than 7,000 dairy cows.

**Question 4.** What is Class I Milk?

**A.** Class I Milk is drinking milk.

**Question 5.** What are Class II and Class III Milk and how are they used?

**A.** When more milk is produced than people will buy to drink, it is called Class II and Class III Milk. Class II and Class III Milk are made into dairy products such as powdered milk, nonfat dry milk, cheese, butter, and ice cream.

**Question 6.** How much milk does the average American use each year?

**A.** The average American uses about 500 pounds of milk and milk products each year.

**Activity 1.** Locate a dairy farm in your area. Then arrange to visit it.

**Activity 2.** Make a list of foods that have milk in them. See how big a list your class can make in a week. Reading the labels on packaged foods will help you in this activity.

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